You Asked

Respond in English: When were all four Gospels fully recognized as Scripture?

DeepSeek

The four Gospels were **widely treated as authoritative Scripture by the late 2nd century**, but their **formal, official recognition as part of a fixed New Testament canon came in the late 4th century**.

Here's how that timeline breaks down:

- **Late 2nd century – de facto recognition**
  By around AD 180, Irenaeus of Lyons argued forcefully that there are exactly four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John), no more and no less, and quoted them as Scripture alongside the Old Testament. The Muratorian Fragment (probably late 2nd century) likewise lists all four Gospels as accepted books.
- **3rd–early 4th century – continued acceptance**
  Writers like Origen and Eusebius show that the four Gospels were universally received in the churches, while other "gospel" texts were rejected.
- **AD 367 – Athanasius' Festal Letter**
  Bishop Athanasius of Alexandria named the 27 books of our New Testament (including the four Gospels exactly as we have them) as the exclusive canonical list. This is the earliest surviving document that matches today's New Testament precisely.
- **Late 4th century – conciliar confirmation**
  Regional church councils in North Africa (Hippo Regius in AD 393, Carthage in AD 397 and 419) officially ratified the same 27-book canon, with the four Gospels at its head. These decisions were eventually received by the wider church.

So, while the four Gospels had been functioning as Scripture for nearly two centuries earlier, **they were fully and formally recognized as the closed fourfold Gospel canon by the whole Church around the end of the 4th century** (most commonly pinned to the Council of Carthage in 397 or Athanasius' letter of 367).